/3/

115 The speech extracts which appear in the present study have
191 been furnished by a T'ou-jen master of ceremonies who was accustomed to preside over the marriage ceremonies in the region. The fact that nearly all the T'ou-jen men speak Chinese more or less is what explains the use of this language, as well as the use of Chinese proverbs, in the course of the marriage ceremonies. Most of the philological notes in the present monograph were furnished by Fathers
104 Mostaert and De Smedt. The transcription of Monguor is the one used by the same Fathers, who adopted the general alphabet of Anthropos (Anthr. XXIV-V), but simplified. The transcription of the Chinese is the romanization adopted by the Variétés.

101 The term T'ou-jen is used by the Chinese of "Sining" to desig-
104 nate the people or peoples of the region who speak the Monguor language and who are under the jurisdiction of a t'ou-se. The term T'ou-jen means "aboriginal."

Although the peoples in question are certainly not the first inhabitants of the country, we have nevertheless thought we should adopt this improper term because it is in current use "in the country" and is used there to designate only this people. The term T'ou-jen is therefore here a people's name. The Tibetans, the Mongols, and the Salar of the country are not T'ou-jen in the eyes of the inhabitants of Sining. Besides, the local chronicles, as well as those of Liang-tcheou and Lan-tcheou use the same term when they deal with this people.

[P.4 is blank]

[8 cont]

114 Scheutvelder missionaries had again given up their Kansu region,
[797] which they left to the Steyler missionaries. After their departure the investigation of the Tujen again came to a halt. The language was already fairly well understood, but records of the rich folk literature and a comparison with the other Tujen dialects in Kansu were lacking. A good foundation had likewise been laid for the sociology. The other spheres, however, had not yet been considered, above all the religion and material culture (economy, clothing).

121 When the author came to this region in 1946, he intended
[177] to begin with precisely these points. The Tujen were already Sinicized to a considerable extent, but in their language, religion, and dress they were able to maintain much of their individuality until the most recent times. Therefore, in particular the legends and songs were taken down, the religious customs studied, and the dress of the Tujen women described. What seemed most interesting to the author was the religion, which is to be dealt with in the following work. The presentation is not definitive, as will become clear repeatedly below, but it does provide the fundamentals and essentials.

115 Since there are almost no written reports on this subject,
123 the author had to utilize the living sources that were available to him during his three-year stay (until 1949), in addition to his own observations. The principal one was an outstanding Tujen man, a living book concerning his people's traditions, and a Tujen singer with an enormous treasure of legends, fairy tales, and songs.

128 The work falls into two parts. The first is a critical presentation of the facts gained from the sources, and by way of introduction the chief source itself (the informant) is to be characterized. The second part presents the theoretical results derived from these facts, namely, the attempt to draw a total picture of the religion and to show the layers out of which it is formed. Hence it is not simply an offhand field report, but is also a systematic survey of the religious situation and its explanation. It is to be regretted that this work had to be
114 broken off at the site because of the suddenly erupting unrest;

[8 cont.]

114 the author owes the safety of the materials collected entirely to the helpfulness of his confreres. In addition to the Fathers Eichinger and Grünewald, S.V.D., I should like to mention here particularly Father Richard Haas, S.V.D., who shortly thereafter was overtaken by a violent death in the Koko Nor steppe.

4. The Sources (the Informant)

●115 The informant came from Tuo-chia, that is, "Tuo home," about one kilometer east of Chi-chia-ling, which lies along the mountain route from Kan-chia-pu (in the Sha-t'ang-ch'uan) to Pai-nai (in the Ha-la-chih-kou). Tuo-chia gets its name from [103] the informant's kin group [Sippe] and formerly embraced perhaps four farmsteads, [9] of which, however, a part has been destroyed by an avalanche. Today only two farms and the temple remain. The Tuo have not always resided here. They [166] come from the vicinity of the Tujen monastery Rgulõn, where [423] a hundred years ago they owned two large horse pastures. Later one of the ancestors moved to the vicinity of Chi-chia-ling and cultivated the fairly extensive upland which paid tribute to the monastery, but which today is the private property of the Tuo family and pays taxes to the county of Huchu. It consists of about 200 Chinese morgen.

114 The report applies primarily to this region, namely, to the Tujen villages Chi-chia-ling, Ta-yang-chüan, Hsiao-
101 yangchüan, and Sha-pa-kou, up into the Na-ling-kou. Since, however, according to my own observations and the statements of the informant, the customs in the county of Huchu are quite uniform, the area to which it is applicable can be extended farther to include the villages between Huchu and Rgulõn. These [628] villages carry on a very lively traffic with one another and are extensively interrelated. As regards numbers, this report covers approximately one quarter of all the Tujen of the Sining region, an area generally regarded as their population center.

115 The old Tuo is kin-group elder and has two younger [776] brothers, who live with him, his sons, his sons' wives, and [553] grandchildren's families. By his first name he is called yifula,

[9 cont.]

115 that is, mountain spirit, because he was consecrated to the
[776] mountain spirit when he was named. He was born under the sign
553 of the sheep, that is, in the second month; according to
[805] European reckoning, this would be March, 1883.
[771] Like all Tujen, the old man is a Lamaist and adheres to the faith and the customs of his fathers. He is known throughout the vicinity as one of the few who are still very well versed in the traditional customs. For that reason he is asked to perform everywhere as master of ceremonies, festive speaker, overseer of sacrifices, and singer. If anyone in that region is asked about usages and customs, the usual answer is: "Go to old Tuo, he knows it best."

115 In addition he has the advantage, rare among the Tujen,
212 of having completed the Chinese classical school. He can read
[871] and write very well, better than most of his Chinese neighbors. He understands without difficulty history books, classical authors, local chronicles, etc., which in part are written in the literary
[191] language. He does not have a sufficient command of the Fandse language to be able to speak it fluently, but he knows the terms of the lamas and is able to distinguish fairly well as to whether a word is a genuine Tujen word or a Fandse word. He himself in his youth took down in Chinese characters a considerable number of Fandse songs, which he can translate and explain, as well as some legends and speeches. He claims that formerly the Tujen language was also written and that the script has simply been lost. -- He does not speak the language of the Koko
115 Nor Mongols, but he claims that it could be understood if neces-
191 sary. Of course the Tujen live too far away from the Mongols;
[648] only those in the vicinity of Huchu have a loose connection with the Mongols on the Tai-t'ung River beyond the Monastery Kuo-mang-szu.

124 [10] In the beginning it was not easy to persuade the old man, who for 20 years had not even been in nearby Sining, to visit me at the mission station at Kan-chia-pu, although the way there was only a two-hour ride. In the late fall of 1946 he came once for only a day. At that time I questioned him about the harvest thank-offering; the result was an article which appeared in Anthropos, 37/40. The old man could not imagine what I

[10 cont.]

124 all kinds of things that I noted in order to learn more about them later.

The old man received no fixed salary. He said: "We two are now used to each other like friends. If now and then you give me a piece of cloth for clothing, it will be all right." It was simply a matter of face. Accordingly, he now and then received cloth for himself and his grandchildren or, when he was ill, some medications. Or I gave him a few scrolls at the harvest festival, bought inks and paper, sent him a little jug of wine now and then, etc. On his part, he made ceremonious [431] calls on me on the customary festive days or sent baked goods, [512] a piece of meat, [11] some milk, as is customary between good acquaintances. Whenever his trips happened to bring him past my station, he would come in briefly to inquire about me. His relatives, too, frequently dismounted when they brought their sacks to the water mill in the valley, especially if the old man happened to be there. Thus a considerable number of Tujen, men, women, and children, gathered at times in the yard and were treated as guests. They told stories, sang, and laughed, and in exchange for some wheat I had to photograph them. In this fashion I was soon well known among them in the mountains.

One day the old man brought a young man to me and said: "Here is the husband of one of my daughters; he knows all the Tujen songs by heart and knows many legends. If you want him to, he will dictate everything. He can also draw pictures." Naturally I wanted him to. I was able to put down on paper a whole series of songs, fairy tales, and myths, among them the Geser saga. In addition he drew a series of pictures for [126] me and with inexhaustible patience sang the different melodies until I could render them on the flute and transcribe them. When we sat together over a jug of wine in the evening, the two men sang their song and I played the flute in accompaniment. Then they felt at ease and said: "Soon we shall all come here, men, women, boys and girls; you kill a sheep and provide the barley wine, and we shall dance and sing."

114 Unfortunately that never happened! The events of the
115 time made a longer stay impossible. On July 1, 1949, I took

[11 cont.]

114 leave of these dear people, for only a few weeks, we thought.
[115] In actual fact, however, I was not to see them again. In the autumn of the same year old Tuo died and with him a portion of ancient knowledge sank into the grave.

My reports concerning the life of the Tujen are therefore incomplete, because prematurely broken off. Also, the work of
124 collecting did not proceed in order. At one time the two dictated only songs. At another time the old man told me about the customs; then I would have to be gone for a number of weeks, then again the work in the fields was so pressing that they stayed away for months. In the meantime I was able to observe a number of things myself and to check on the reports, or I met other Tujen and had them tell me things.

115 Time and again I found that the reports of the old man
124 were the most precise, the most ample, and the most reliable. Once, when I was able to observe a part of the puberty rite, the old man asked me immediately: "Well, how was it? Is it not true that I related everything correctly?" He took the position: "As an old man I do not lie anymore." Occasionally he would also say: "What I say is true; what I do not know, I do not say. Everything I tell you, I myself have experienced, led, and seen at home. Ask the others." He would also warn me about others: "What that one says is not quite accurate, he exaggerates; he is still a young man." Even among his compatriots old Tuo was regarded as an honest man; his classmate in particular emphasized his reliability. He even expressed his opinion to me whenever I said I had seen something in such and such a way: "Father, you have made a mistake." Glossing anything over for my sake was scarcely to be observed.

115 [12] Once, when he was gravely ill and unable to get up
123 for several months, I said in front of others: "What a pity if old Tuo were to die; he is such an honest, good man." This was later reported to him and it pleased him greatly. As I was once able to observe from my room without being noticed, it confirmed him in his sense of honor: "What? The Father says that I am an honest man. I owe it to myself to speak the truth."

The chief inhibition on his part consisted of the fear of ridicule. It was a long time before he was certain that I

[12 cont.]

115 123 respected their customs and did not condemn them or brand them as backward superstitions. In this respect one cannot in the long run disguise his feelings. With a sure sense the natives noticed whether one meets them with good will and respect or regards himself as superior to them. Since the old man was no dolt and had also read many a Chinese book, he knew, for example, that the Chinese tend to dismiss the peoples on their borders as [181] barbarians. He also knew how the Chinese nearby laugh at the Tujen as backward "natives." And finally he had heard that the Christians designate as superstition much that is dear and sacred to the Tujen and the Chinese. Thus it is understandable that occasionally he would say: "Father, do not be surprised when I tell you such and such. We believe in it." Or: "Please do not laugh at it when we do something in such a way." On his part, this inhibition was extensively bridged by the genuinely tolerant [829] attitude of the Asiatic: "All religions are good. The goal is the same, only the ways are different." On my part, the decisive attitude was that every person's conviction is to be respected if he means it honestly, even though, objectively speaking, he may be on the wrong road. The same applies to religion. And when I told the old man, "I believe such and such; you believe such and such, but I am not therefore better than you; it depends upon the conscience," he gladly agreed. Nor was any attempt ever made to influence him in his religion. He knew little about Christianity, but neither did he regard it as mystery-mongering when he inquired about it among my people. They always stressed to him: "You can hear and see everything that we do. We have no secret religion. We tell you everything. If you want to read our books, you may have them." One day he came with the question: "Should I not become a Christian?" I told him: "That depends on you. The heart of a man cannot be forced. Everyone should act according to his insight."

115 171 It greatly cheered his openheartedness to find many a similarity between the Christian and Tujen ceremonies. Thus he was quite surprised at the fire ceremony on Easter eve. In the church he saw altars, saints' images, an oil lamp. He saw how the Christians fell on their knees. He knew: We, too,

[12 cont.]

115 sacrifice bread and wine, we, too, had a lord of heaven, we, too,
171 had a holy mother; we, too, burned incense, had consecrated water, blessed houses and cattle; we, too, prayed for the sick and anointed them with oil; we, too, had a baptism; we, too, had a procession through the meadow and prayed for the blessings of good weather; [13] we, too, had a redeemer similar to their Geser; we, too, had temples with solemn prayer and divine service; we, too, had monks and nuns; we, too, had good angels and evil demons.

115 Thus the old man felt more and more at home in our surroundings, even though he no longer spoke of becoming a Christian. In the end his judgment was: "Your religion is better. You help man."

123 As a result of our mutual genuine respect, the old man put me in the right light in his circle of acquaintances, above all among the lamas. They regarded me as one who has religion himself and does not make fun of their gods and monks. ; Accordingly I was invited one day by a Tujen family to serve as "prayer-sayer" for a funeral service, which, however, I declined. When I entered the Tujen lamasery, the monks assigned me a clean room for the Mass. They understood when I requested pure water for the "sacrifice," and when I preferred not to be interrupted. Then I placed a cross before the images of the Lamaist deities and in the presence of the curious but silent lamas I celebrated the Mass. And just as I never expected the people to kneel, for instance, or to give any other signs of reverence, so they never expected a similar courtesy from us.

[609] By the way, certain travelers report how they had their fortunes told or how they were blessed by this or that hutukhtu, and the like, this makes little impression upon the populace, aside from the fact that the people see through such conduct and often regard it merely as a superfluous gesture of courtesy.

115 In spite of the fact that as the result of this highly satis-
123 factory relationship I was able to see and hear all kinds of things, I am well aware that I by no means learned everything. No one likes to tell a foreigner about all the darker sides of his people or ticklish things. Nor was anything else to be expected in

[13 cont.]

123 view of the highly developed sense of honor of the old man.
115 For instance, he could not be persuaded to dictate the well-
[888] known mountain songs which often contain quite crude observations. On such occasions he would say: "For an old man like me this is not fitting, nor is it for you. Yes, when I was younger ... "Actually, younger people are freer in this respect. But even then they will ask: "Are there no women nearby?" It is not to be overlooked that the old man knew very well that my notations were also to go abroad. He told me about the informant of Father De Smedt, who helped the latter to write books and had even been far away in Mongolia. -- Ordinary uneducated farmers are easily satisfied with the observation: "If you came to Europe, would you not ask what they eat and drink there and what peculiar customs they have? What kind of songs they sing, what gods they worship?" And in fact one can often hear the people say: K'an i-ko jê-nao, k'an i-ko hsi-ch'a, that is, "Let us take a look at the excitement and see what is extraordinary." In view of the ethnic and religious mixture in Tsinghai, the people are in this respect much more generous.

The old man immediately understood that my notations would form a book. And he was proud of helping with it: "You Europeans are to be admired. We Tujen do nothing [14] to preserve our history for our descendants. In some ten years we will have become Chinese; then nothing more will be known of our language, our customs, our religion. And you want to write down everything now so that nothing will be forgotten; your service is great."

115 Another obstacle in taking notes was the informant's age.
124 He tired very easily, made digressions, and at times would interrupt the most interesting narrative by suddenly asking: "Is your father still alive? How old is he? Are you going to Koko Nor shortly?" -- and then everything would lapse into a purposeless digressive conversation. Or he would suddenly feel unwell, would want to go to sleep at once, etc. Apparently he had the following attitude: I am the guest here of a good acquaintance, just as with my kin group; we talk about this and that, go home when we want, and come back... Accordingly, it also happened that he showed up when I was not at home, merely to visit the

[14 cont.]

115 people with whom he was so well acquainted. As a kin-group
124 father, he was accustomed to a free life as his own master, and all compulsion was hateful to him.

Finally it should be taken into account that for a native it is not easy to pick out what seems worth knowing to the stranger. Everything is self-evident to him. And even the stranger cannot exhaustively inquire into all the details at one time, or even at the third or fourth time. But even in this respect the old man assisted me as much as possible.

5. The Taking of Notes

124 The conversations and questioning always took place in
191 Chinese, a language which all Tujen men and almost all Tujen women speak, except when they are among themselves. Now-
[871] adays there are schools in most of the villages, in which Chinese is the prescribed language of instruction. Since I was still on the point of learning the Tujen language, Chinese was the only one possible, and in view of our mutual familiarity with this language the possibility of a misunderstanding was very slight. In case of obscurities in the dialect, the old man was always able to give the corresponding Chinese signs; he then explained the meaning by various circumlocutions.

124 The old man proceeded from the assumption that I
126 wanted to learn the Tujen language. He therefore dictated to me brief sentences about a certain object, which I took down; for instance, "The lama is coming. They are sweeping the house. They are burning incense. Lamps are placed on the table, etc. ..." Unfortunately I did not keep these sentences. Afterwards he repeated the sense for me in Chinese; some explanations of words were added. That was the first report each time. I immediately wrote this down in German. Sometimes it was very brief, sometimes somewhat longer. In every case, however, the course of an action, the peculiarity of a ceremony, etc. were briefly and concisely summarized. Since I was actually not primarily concerned with the language, but rather with the content, I asked for supplementary details after each report, at times immediately following, and at times only in

3: Schröder--85 M-5 (1946-1949)1952-1953 AE9 Monguor AE9

[46 cont.]

[Pages 46-49 contain the notes given above as numbered footnotes. Plates 1 and 2 appear between pp. 48 and 49.]

Caption for Plate 1.

115

[14] [241] [302] a: The informant Tuo Yifula from Tuo-chia near Chi-chia-ling in Huchu County. Tujen. Born March, 1883; died in the autumn of 1949. Taken in the mission station at Kanchia-p'u, summer, 1948. (To accompany "Introduction.") b: Lama setting the 792 conch to his mouth for blowing. Taken May 11, 1949, in the 796 monastery Fu-hai-szu or Hsin-szu (Guämbasoma) in the vicinity [534] of the Koko Nor. (To accompany the chapter: "The Incense [292] Offering.") c: A Tulku with his cult-apparatus at prayer. In [782] front of him the text, in his left hand the mani-string. In the [778] background assisting lamas. Taken in the monastery Fu-hai-szu, May, 1948. (To accompany the chapter: "The Lama-reception.") d: Gurtum from Hei-tsui-p'u in the Hsi-ch'uan. 756 Taken in his yard, autumn, 1948. We were not allowed to enter through the yard gate, but had to climb in over the roof; this is what the tutelary spirit demanded. In his right hand * [778] the gurtum is holding the spirit-spear, in his left the catching [292] line and the spirit-sword with the handle down. He is not wearing the five-part crown. This simple kind of gurtum is very widespread in Tsinghai. (To accompany the chapter: "The Gurtum.")

3: Schröder--84 M-5 (1946-1949)1952-1953 AE9 Monguor AE9

[Between pp. 48 and 49.]

115
142
291
302
792
796
534
292

Plate 1

a

b

792
796
782
292
* 778

c

d

(Caption on following page.)

4: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

However, if he does not satisfy the requirements, and does not acquit himself creditably, if his answers are wrong and his dances inadequate and inelegant, he fails abjectly. The angry Buddha, rebuking and snubbing him, pulls off one of his boots and throws it contemptuously and disdainfully at the head of the Kurtain, upbraiding his impudent audacity, saying: "You are not possessed by a spirit, but by an ox, go on." All hopes of the candidate are dashed forever; the trust of the people in him is uprooted. He goes away discomfited, dishonorably evicted, and the possession is finished. The Kurtain cannot withstand the verdict of a Buddha who blocks his way. Twice I attended such a test, once at the monastery of T'ien-t'ang and once at Ch'ie-bzan. I inquired about the fantastic tales current all over the country, concerning the fact that the authenticity of the Kurtains can be tested by making them lick white-hot iron, pierce their chest with a sword, walk and sit on thorns. Always the answers were that in olden times when the Kurtains were more potent, they could stand such tests, but the present Kurtains are not made of the same stuff as in olden times, and therefore these tests can no longer be made.

TESTS OF THE KURTAINS POSSESSED BY A LAMAIST DEITY

The Kurtains possessed by Lamaist deities seem to have possessions of a lower grade. The Kurtain of Seerkok was said to be possessed by the deity Kortong (?) whose incarnation was one of the minor Living Buddhas staying at the monastery. The Kurtain of Erh-ku-lung was possessed by the minor deity Niebturk bzan whose incarnation, of second or third rank, was living at the monastery. The pictures of both deities, which I saw at the Karwa of these incarnations, represented the familiar type of the hundreds of Buddhas quietly sitting crosslegged absorbed in meditation, but the men they possessed were none the less furious Kurtains. Learned lamas did not have any knowledge of Kurtains possessed by the so-called guardians of the faith, which are pictured as terrible, cruel warriors. They asserted that all the possessions were manifestations of minor deities, and they could not easily explain how furious Kurtains were possessed by peaceful deities. Concerning the question of the possession of a lama by a Lamaist deity, they deemed it possible, but did not remember such cases in the country.

I never had the opportunity to attend a test ceremony for the kind of Kurtains possessed by Lamaist deities, but the information acquired from Living Buddhas, lamas, and laymen, seemed to show that little difference existed between the tests of both kinds of Kurtains. The subjects, their avocation, and training are similar, as well as the theatrical performance in the court of the main temple. The Kurtain is attired in the same way and uses the same weapons in the same way, but he must wear on his head the crown of the five Dhyana

4: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

examines their position. "All right!" he cries. "all events will be all right this year, the village will enjoy peace and thrive; this year you will be preserved from hail!" A piece of red cloth is tied with a red rope on the bottle, which is put under the empty container inside the temple for seven days. 796 756 782

After all the rites have been accomplished, the villagers go home taking with them their own thrones of the ancestors and as many paper banners and streamers as possible, in order to place them with the deities honored at home. The shamans and the elders have a meal and plenty of wine for the whole night. The next morning the shamans leave; they came riding empty-handed on a donkey, and go back driving the donkey, laden with rolls and offerings, some wheat, and a meager payment in cash.

FEAR OF HUMAN SACRIFICES

During the second, third, and fourth months, the time during which these rites are performed in one village after another, everywhere children are encountered wearing around their necks strips of filthy, stinking cloth, with which the women had wrapped their feet (for they do not wear stockings). The heads of some children are covered with a handkerchief containing dog hair; the foreheads of some children are scratched and lightly wounded. Several times a day the children are enjoined not to eat jujubes or nuts lying along the way or in the temple yards, for fear that the spirits, avid for human sacrifices, might allure them and take their souls. Everywhere it is said that, notwithstanding the rites taking the place of the former human sacrifices, once in a while some of the spirits take a child. All these practices are used in order to frighten the spirits and to preserve the children desired by this kind of evil spirit. If, during these months, a child dies, everybody is convinced that his soul has been taken by the terrible spirits. 782 784 789 751

These practices give evidence that the belief in human sacrifices required by spirits is deeply ingrained in the minds of the people. At that time, meeting children so arrayed affords a fine opportunity to collect details about the rites of spring, and the talks of the shamans, and to get an insight into the religious trend of mind of the people. These facts make it plain that the Monguor shamans, honoring Taoist spirits and performing most of the rites of the Wu of China and of the shamans living in the neighboring countries, have preserved their urge for human sacrifices. The Monguor shamans nurture the weakened, exhausted spirits in the temples with captured human souls. The burying of the Chinese beggar in the mound, in order to succeed in the struggle against the hail spirits, and the occasional capturing of a boy for the same purpose, facts attested by many trustworthy men, give evidence of the assumption. However, constraint is imposed upon them by a more civilized environment than that 782 [115] [682]

[P. 112 (A)]

4: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

people who have taken the Buddhist vows, are the usual practitioners.

TOPICS OF THE INSTRUCTIONS

Each year I seized every opportunity to get information from fasters concerning that captivating subject, and asked the children in the schools about what grandpa or grandma had said about the lama director, the topics of the preachings, the anecdotes narrated, the number of fasters. Every time the fasters reported that they were happy to have performed the exercises, although they had had a hard time. They had prayed in a group innumerable Om Manis, which had caused them to have a real feeling of happiness, and they had enjoyed the preaching. They seemed to be better Lamaists than before, for they spoke with enthusiasm about their experiences. Without doubt the fast rites had helped buoy them up and had given them zest for life.

However, it was always said that the directors of the exercises were not all interesting talkers, that some were really boring men, but that they all loved Li, the old Living Buddha of Erh-ku-lung. Every year, at three places at least, he was invited, and the fasters urged that the date of the exercises be postponed, in order to enjoy the old man's direction since he had endeared himself to the hearts of the people. He was an intelligent old Living Buddha, a picture of benevolence, with a great kind face, molded on pontifical lines, and all set for hearty smiles. He was a wonderful storyteller, with sparkling wit and a fetching sense of humor, who had the knack of keeping the fasters listening for two and three hours every day. He expounded his doctrine by means of anecdotes and unusual comparisons, which his uncultivated listeners could grasp, remember, and tell to others. He was a fine teacher.

The beloved topic of his talk was the life of Buddha, who fled from the luxurious palace of his illustrious parents; his terrifying mortifications and his endless charity, even for tigers and other animals, so that he had allowed himself to be devoured by the hungry tigress in order that she might nourish her cubs; his refusal to enter paradise, in order to remain in and save the world. Another topic was the paradise of Buddha and its oriental splendor where everybody hoped to go eventually; and also that of the eighteen hells, with all the terrifying torments used in the Orient. He used to put stress, in nearly every talk, on the omniscience of the terrible but equitable judge of death, who accepts no bribes, who knows all the merits and demerits of everyone; whose mill of justice grinds, in the most minute way, all our acts and intentions.

All the children knew that the poor in this world are people who are suffering, for their lack of charity in former existences, or for their covetousness or injustices. The topic of the punishments for injustices was one of those most elaborately developed by all the

presented to the Living Buddha with the scarf. It is the gift for outstanding persons. Then the master of ceremonies makes his traditional speech. After having thanked the Living Buddha, he starts his usual speech of apology: "We are ashamed to have treated the holy man so irreverently, the meat we prepared was tough and tasteless for it was meat of an old animal. The rolls were badly kneaded and hard, and boiled in rancid oil. The k'ang, on which the holy man slept was not heated enough. The holy man could not sleep a wink the whole night. Our k'ang is too short, the saintly man could not stretch out his noble legs. The felt spread on the k'ang was too thin, his holy limbs must be sore. We are a poor family and should like to offer a herd of sheep. We are ashamed to be only able to offer an old horse, saddled with a broken saddle. Our harvest this year was the worst we ever reaped, so we can afford only to offer a couple of sacks of rancid rolls. To add to our frustration, the wool of our sheep was so bad and short this year, that we can only offer a thin felt poorly prepared by an unskilled artisan. The butter we prepared for the lamas and the lamps is nearly all rancid. What we offer to you is more like a gift offered at a burial than a gift fit for these circumstances." Then the maternal uncle and the celebrant prostrate themselves, apologizing and presenting the scarf. The Living Buddha protests that he is very happy, and thanks the family for its prodigality, and promises his blessings.

At the moment of departure the family kneels with incense sticks in their joined hands at the gate of the courtyard; each of the assistant lamas receive two strings of cash, and the Living Buddha takes with him the packet of dollars. After him follow some youngsters with a beautiful horse, saddled with the finest saddle, and a precious rug upon it, with some animals carrying butter and tea for the lamas of the monastery, rolls, meat and sugar, and the news is spread all over the country that so and so offered such and such gifts with an unusual prodigality.

Poor families offer to the Living Buddha fifty strings of cash instead of a horse. The celebrant who belongs to a still poorer family goes at noon with his maternal uncle to the lamasery, in order to see a Living Buddha who performs the rites upon him and is presented with two strings of cash.[17]

This information was given me by several masters of ceremonies and Monguors who attended the rites, and had themselves performed them.

XIII. DEATH

In connection with the funeral customs of the Monguors, a few words should be said about their notions concerning the souls, because these have an important bearing upon the funeral customs.

[17] Schröder, *op. cit.*, *Der Alters Segen*, 630.